THE BEARING OF RECENTLY DISCOVERED CUNEIFORM TEXTS ON GREEK HISTORY AND THOUGHT

H. F. LUTZ

[Reprint from the University of California Chronicle, October, 1926]

THE BEARING OF RECENTLY DISCOVERED CUNEIFORM TEXTS ON GREEK HISTORY AND THOUGHT

H. F. LUTZ

The earliest mention of the Greeks in the cuneiform texts known up to the present has been that recorded in the inscriptions of Sargon (722–705 B. C.). The Assyrian king informs us that he had "drawn forth as fishes those who belong to the land of Yavan (*ia-am-na-a-a*) who are in the midst of the sea." This reference is probably to the conquest of the piratical Greeks, for Eusebius (I. 35), quoting Abydenus, states regarding Sargon's successor Sennacherib that he defeated the fleet of the Greeks in a maritime battle off the Cilician coast. In Sennacherib's reign (705–681 B. C.) we hear that the king hired Phoenician and Greek sailors to assist in his Elamite campaign. Another cuneiform mention of the Ionians occurs in the Behistun and Naksh-i-Rustam inscriptions of Darius. These were about all we had of references to the Greeks in the cuneiform inscriptions, and these were, at that, of rather late date.

The Egyptian inscriptions, however, have given us much earlier data reaching back to *ca.* 1300 B. C. In them we note that, in the great Hittite-Egyptian war during the reign of Rameses II, the *Ye-van-na*, *Yevana*=*Yavan*, *Yavanu*, "Ionians" are mentioned among the auxiliary troops of the Hittite king. It was customary at one time to see in the mention of the Ionians as allies of the Hittites a mere poetic exaggeration by the author of the Rameses-*epos*, who, it was thought, had simply incorporated within the group of "allies" all the Westerners who were known to him. In the

light of what we now know—to which I shall refer shortly—the passage in the Rameses inscription is now corroborated as actual fact by the new material from Boghazkoi. The inscriptions from Egypt gave us more. In the time of Merenptah are mentioned also the *A-ka-y-va-sha*, Achaivos, Achivus, or Achaeans, as allies of the Lybians.

Six Asia-Minor peoples are enumerated among the allies of the Hittite king against Rameses II, and it is significant that among them the Achaeans are not mentioned. This is exactly what we should expect. At this place are mentioned the Ruka, the Lykians (whom the cuneiform texts mention as the Lugga people); the Dard(a)ni=Dardanoi, i.e., the inhabitants of the city of Dardanos on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont (see below); the Masa, or Maosu, who are the Mysians in spite of Homer (II.13.3), who lets them dwell in Thrace; the Ionians; the Pidasa, who can now be identified from the recently discovered cuneiform texts as the Pitassa people whose territory extended south of Lake Givash; and the Karakisha, the Cilicians, whom we must think dwelt at this time, according to Homer, about Thebes in the Troad, or in Mysia at the mountain of Plakos, and about Lyrnessos in the Troad.

The Egyptian inscriptions, it is evident, apart from mere names do not afford much information on the early Greeks. The recently deciphered texts from Boghazkoi have therefore thrown most welcome light on the history of the early Greeks. Furthermore, they have enlarged our knowledge to some degree in two directions, namely, in regard to the political power of the pre-Homeric Greeks, on the one hand, and the geography of Asia Minor, on the other.

We now know that the Troad together with Mysia and Lydia comprehended the land of Assuva; and Assuva, in time, extended its name to the whole continent of Asia. Assuva, according to the *Annals of Todhalia*, consisted of twenty-two provinces, of which the last one mentioned is called Ta-ru-i-sa, which Forrer has identified as the name of Troy, arguing correctly that the cuneiform script, being a syllabic script, was able to render the double consonance

only by the insertion of a vowel; while the sibilant change to h, Troiha, which finally became Troia, is accounted for by the fact that the name had already, in the eleventh century, passed into the Greek language. The *Annals of Todhalia* thus contain the oldest, and at the same time the only, mention of Troy in the cuneiform inscriptions.

The original Troisa is etymologically connected with *tursis* "tower, fortress," and with *Tursenoi*, the Greek name for the Etruscans. With reference to the Etruscan question, we have to bear in mind the, to all appearances, true tradition that it was the Troian prince Aeneas who was the ancestral hero of the Romans; furthermore, that the Greeks regarded Rome as an Etruscan city. The Etruscan element formed the patrician party of Rome, not the Sabines, while the Latins were plebeians. Herodotus (I.94) states that the *Tursenoi* emigrated from Lydia, i.e., western Asia Minor. From the Egyptian inscriptions we get the earliest reference to the Tursenoi, called *Ti-u-ir-sha*, *Ti-u-r-sha*, and *Tu-r-sha*, from the sarcophagus of a mercenary, whose name was *Iwn-n-tu-r-sha*, "the Tursh-support," i.e., "the faithful, dependable Tursh." He lived during the middle or latter part of the Nineteenth Dynasty. Rameses III mentions the *Tursh* among the pirates who plundered the Syrian and Egyptian coast districts. And again, in the time of Merenptah, the *Tursh* together with the *Shardin* (Sardinians) form the chief number of sea robbers who infested the Egyptian waters. The headdress of the *Tursh* is related to that of the Asia Minor peoples, which would indicate that Herodotus' statement is correct that they emigrated from that country. But the Egyptian inscriptions name them together with the *Shardin*, so that there can now, with the additional knowledge gained from the Boghazkoi material, be no doubt that the *Tursh* are indeed the Etruscans. In passing, I may remark that the Etruscans are also mentioned in Genesis 10. 2 under the name of *Tiras*.

A most important historical mention of the Greeks which the cuneiform texts have recently brought to light falls about 1325 B.C., i.e., during the reign of Murshili of Hatti, who

ruled from *ca.* 1337 to 1312 B. C. After an unnamed prince had conquered part of the land of Iyalanda and had destroyed some castles of Murshili, the Lugga people (the Lukaones) called upon a certain Tavagalavas, king of Ahhiyava, with a request for protection, because they feared an attack by the unnamed prince. At the same time they also got into communication with the Hittite king, so as to receive the help of Murshili. The relations between these two monarchs we know were friendly, for Tavagalavas, in the first year of Murshili's reign, had placed himself on the side of the Hittite king. In the *Annals of Murshili*, where are preserved the messages between Tavagalavas and Murshili, it is shown that Tavagalavas came into his kingdom as a vassal prince of Murshili, but that, at the time of the war against the hostile prince, he had not yet taken the oath of fealty to the Hittite king. The same text also shows that Tavagalavas, though at one time desirous of being taken to Murshili to pledge his fealty, later on changed his mind, saying: "Give me the kingdom immediately! but if not, then I shall not come." Whatever the reason for this change of mind, whether an evil conscience or, perhaps, fear, it is clear that Tavagalavas must have felt himself strong and secure enough to offer resistance to the Hittite king.

But who is this Tavagalavas? He was king of Ahhiyava, which is Acheia. According to Hittite phonetic laws, unaccented ayi becomes iya, and thus Ahhiyava developed from Ahhayiva. Ahhiyava is therefore the land of the Achaeans, the land of the Greeks, i.e., Greece. From the somewhat later Egyptian inscriptions, as indicated above, we also know that the Achaeans had no hold on Asia Minor; another reason why we must consider Ahhiyava as representing Greece proper.

The name of the king of the Achaeans, Tavagalavas, is the Hittite rendering of the Greek Etevokleves, of which the later form is Eteokles. Eteokles, furthermore, is called "*a-ya-va-la-as* king," i.e., "king of the Aeolians," the first cuneiform reference to that name. From the address which the Hittite king employs toward Eteokles, calling him "my

brother," that is to say, employing the phraseology customary among the kings of that time when writing to their equals, it follows that the Greek king must have been the representative of no mean power, but must have been a Great King equal to the Hittite king himself. Yet, the rise of the country of Ahhiyava must have been of more recent date. Considerations which Forrer has brought forth make it certain that Tavagalavas was Great King of Greece, and that his vassalage to the king of Hatti was due to the fact that he was at the same time ruler of Pamphylia, and as such had to render the oath of allegiance to Murshili. This friendly relationship between Greece and Hatti existed as far back as the first year of Murshili (1336 B. C.), and was shown on the occasion when the Arzaova king aroused the country of Millavanda to war against the king of Ahhiyava. Murshili sent his troops to the assistance of the king of Greece and Millavanda was overthrown. The friendly relations between the two countries, indeed, must have existed even earlier, under Shubbiluliuma (1385–1340 B. C.), the father of Murshili. But the acknowledgment of Ahhiyava as a large, sovereign power took place during the reign of Murshili, some few years after his accession to the throne.

Eteokles is called king of the Aeoleans. We are thus carried to Boeotia and the island of Lesbos, which were the true Aeolean districts. As has been surmised, it is probably, therefore, not accidental that the excavations in Orchomenos have brought to light the remains of a peculiar culture, with large buildings, which would indicate that Orchomenos was once the capital of a considerable political power. Pausanias mentions as the founder of the kingdom of Orchomenos a certain Andreus, while local tradition mentions Eteokles as its second king. The name of Andreus seems, indeed, to be preserved in the cuneiform inscriptions coming from the Boghazkoi archives. In an omen text which deals with occurrences in the first years of Murshili's rule, a certain Antaravas (*ca.* 1350–1325) is mentioned, who, according to the context at least, must have been king of Ahhiyava and Lazpa. Lazpa has been identified with Lesbos. Ahhiyava

itself, in the time of Antaravas or Andreus, may not yet have included the whole of Greece, but merely the Aeolean territory, i.e., Achaia-Phthiotis in Thessaly with the Achaean mountains bordering it on the south, as well as Achaia in the Peloponnesus.

We hear of a third Achaean king in the time of Todhalia, a certain Attarissiyas. This king had attacked, *ca.* 1250 B. C., the western border states of Asia Minor, notably Zippasla, due north of the island of Rhodes, a territory which formed the southern portion of later Caria. Through this hostile act Hatti had come into immediate danger from Great Greece. Twice Attarissiyas attacked Madduvattas, king of Zippasla, but the second time he was defeated in a great battle by Todhalia. The ideas of conquest entertained by this Greek king were of large scope. He planned to take possession of the island of Cyprus, or at least to control a part thereof. For this reason he entered into an alliance with the chief of Biggaya, as the northern coastal region of Cyprus was called, devastated the island (*ca.* 1225 B. C.), and carried away the spoil. Referring to this invasion the Hittite king calls both the Greek king and the Cyprian chieftain *kuirvanas* (=*koiranos*) "independent rulers." From the Egyptian inscriptions again, we learn that Cyprus was, in fact, finally occupied by the Greeks some thirty years later.

These are, in brief, the new factors furnished by the Boghazkoi material. It gives us only some incidents in the reigns of three rulers of pre-Homeric Greece. But, though meager the facts, they visualize to us a larger kingdom of Greece, whose ruler was considered an equal with any of the great rulers of the Ancient Near East at that time. These facts bring Greek history into direct connection with the history of the Near Eastern peoples themselves. We see them in alliance with the great Hittite power, and waging war with Asia Minor peoples, and with the inhabitants of Cyprus. There is nothing to imply that the early Greeks had built a Chinese wall about themselves. On the contrary; coming into contact with the Oriental peoples at a time when

the cuneiform script was the world script employed in the state chanceries of the various states, it would not be surprising if we should also find cultural contacts between pre-Homeric Greece and the Near East, and especially contact between Greek thought and the Babylonian thought which permeated the entire cultural outlook of its era.

That the Hittites were acquainted with Babylonian culture no one will seriously dispute, but that Babylonian culture and thought affected in so small degree the early Greeks is a matter less conceded, for the obvious reason that the post-Homeric Greeks do not, to any extent, show its influence. That contacts must have existed very early is of course quite clear when we consider, for instance, the alphabet. The alphabet, it is true, did not come from the Babylonians—and as little did it come from Crete; it came from the Western Semites. Now the West Semitic alphabet does not appear in actual inscriptions before 1000 B. C., but certain indications make it clear that its invention must reach back into the middle of the second millenium B. C. That anyone would seriously consider the derivation of the Greek alphabet as coming from the Cretan script, as Professor Bates, of Pennsylvania has done, is a psychological conundrum. The very fact that the Greek letters, apart from the Greeks' own tradition of a Phoenician origin of their alphabet, have Semitic names, should have prevented him from looking elsewhere. Not only the alphabetical signs, and their names, but also the arrangement of the signs has been taken over intact. Whatever the merit or demerit of the thesis that there existed an alphabetical arrangement which was built up on the stroke and circle system, which brought the letters *l*, *m*, *n*, or rather *l*, *n*, *m*, together and apparently placed these letters at the beginning of the alphabetical arrangement, no serious doubt can be entertained that the Phoenician and Greek alphabets follow an astral arrangement determined according to the astro-mythological viewpoint of the Babylonians. The arrangement is as follows: *aleph*, steer, a steerhead as the moon symbol; *beth*, house, moon and planet station in the ecliptic;

gimel, a weapon, the *gamlu* weapon, a star in Taurus; *daleth*, door and *he*, heaven(?), the milky way between Taurus and twins; *waw*, hydra(?), dragon(?), the great twins; *zayin*, twins(?), the little twins, later Cancer; *cheth*, chariot body, wagon body, and *teth*, wagon wheel, *Ursus Major*=Babylonian wagon, to which the two twin dragons were thought to be harnessed; the dragon wagon survived in the wagon of Triptolemos, son of Eleusis, who was adored as the disseminator of agriculture and culture in general; *yod*, arm, symbol of the planet Mercury; *kaph*, hand, symbol of the planet Venus; *lamed*, plow-share, as symbol of Nebo in the constellation of the ram; *mim*, water, sign of Aquarius; *nun*, fish, Pisces; *samek*, heavenly roof, symbol of the milky way after Aquarius, Pisces, and Ram; *ain*, eye, symbol of the sun; *pi*, mouth, symbol of the planet Mars; *sade*, soul-bird, lit. *saday* "brain, echo," and mythologically the bird which flies from the brain of the murdered, the planetary symbol of Mars (a sperber upon a pole); *qoph*, *koppa*, battle-mace, symbol of Jupiter; *resh*, head, symbol of Jupiter; *shin*, *urin*, originally rain of the stars; *thau*, cross, symbol of the planet Saturn and also of the waning moon which brings rain.

That the astral arrangement of the letters was perhaps not a matter unknown to the Greeks at the time when it was introduced, we may gather from the general consideration that not a few astro-mythological elements have found their way into Greece. So for instance in regard to the myth of the *dioskoroi* who represent moon and sun. Both Kastor and Polydeukes (Pollux) were lifted into the sky after their death, where they shine as the constellation of the twins (Didumoi) and serve the sailors as guides. The myth, however, implies that moon and sun cannot permanently be united; whenever the one is in the upper world, the other is in the lower world, in Hades. Both have a sister (Helena), the third member of the great astral trinity, Ishtar-Venus. The position of the dioskoroi at the beginning of the year, as everywhere in the Ancient Near East where the historical form of representation according to fixed systems is known, is significant. The rise of nations or the advent of definite

historical periods is frequently adorned with this Babylonian mythological motive. Since everything that happens in the world, according to Babylonian ideas, is a mere reflex of the heavenly world, and since the movements of the stars show what happens on earth, therefore everything that happens must be in agreement with that which is written in the skies, the great book of revelation. Thus especially eventful happenings had to show agreement with the important turning-points in the heavenly rotation. Now, since the twins or dioskoroi began the year with their month, therefore the dioskoroi legend has been employed most generally to embellish the beginning of a new historical epoch of development. In fact, the use of this motive thereby sufficiently indicated such a new epoch. Thus the narrative of the period of the Athenian freedom, the expulsion of the tyrants, begins with two brothers or friends, as in the case of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, the slayers of Hipparchos, eldest son of Peisistratos, who avenge the honor of a virgin, but of whom only one remains alive. So also in the case of Lucretia, the spouse of Tarquinius Collatinus, who stabbed herself to death after being raped by the son of the last Roman emperor, Tarquinius Superbus. In this instance, her husband and L. Iunius Brutus became her avengers and freed Rome from the royal lordship. Virginia, the daughter of the centurion, L. Virginius, was stabbed to death by her father in the marketplace in order to save her from the snares of the decemvir, Appius Claudius Regillensis Crassus. Her avengers were Valerius and Horatius. These historical legends are adorned with the dioskoroi motive, which generally lets a new era begin with the expulsion of tyrants (whether king or decemvir). That Harmodius and Aristogeiton, however, are not at all tyrant opponents, and that we have here simply a legendary adornment, was observed long ago by Thucydides.

The founding of the city of Ascalon, according to Xanthos in the fourth book of his *Lydiaca*, as quoted by Stephanos of Byzantium, is described in similar mythological form. According to him, and also according to Nicolaos

Damascenos in the fourth book of his history, the sons of a certain Hymenaios, Tantalos and Ascalos, were separated by the Lydian king, Akiamos, by sending Ascalos with an army to Syria. There the latter fell in love with a maiden and founded a city to which he gave his name. Here, too, the original astral-mythological form of historical representation is still clearly discernible. The story of the sons of Pelops, Atreus and Thyestes, to whom had been handed over the lordship of Midea (Lebadea) by Sthenelos, after the latter had chased Amphitryon, the father of Herakles, from Argos, also preserves elements of the customary historical viewpoint.

An echo of the influence of Assyro-Babylonian culture upon Greece is probably to be found in the exaggerated importance which later historians attached to the Assyrian power. Thus Ktesias, a physician who went *ca.* 416 B. C. to Persia and wrote a Persian history in twenty-three books, narrates concerning Ninos that he had conquered Troas. This is also maintained by Plato in his dialogue concerning the laws. Speaking of the conquest of the Peloponnesus by the Dorians under the three Heraklides, Temenos, Eresphontes, and Aristodemos, he says: "It is pretty clear that they [the Heraklides] believed that their undertaking would not only render suitable assistance to the Peloponnesians, but also to all Hellenes when a barbarian should injure them; as, for example, the neighbors of Ilion at that time, who, trusting in the power of the Assyrians, founded by Ninos, boldly stirred up war against Ilion. For the lingering reputation of that kingdom was still not insignificant. Just as we fear the great king, even so that compact power frightened the former [Greeks]. For a great guilt they had laid upon themselves through the second conquest of Ilion since it had become part of that kingdom."

Historically, this statement of Plato is of little value, but it seems that he must have had in mind the Greek myth which ascribes the founding of Ilion to Ilos. Ilos apparently was taken to be a personification of the Assyrian empire through its god Ilu. Philological speculation may

have been at the root of this, as well as the fact that Ilos is called the son of Dardanos, the founder of Dardania, who in Greek tradition is permitted to come from Crete and from Samothrake. The tradition, it is obvious, is here confused. A philological interpretation may have had the Assyrian *tartanu* "general-in-chief" in mind. But it is strange that the castle of Ilion also is called Dardania. Should one conclude therefore that an Assyrian garrison under an Assyrian *tartanu* occupied it, and that the Greeks thereupon coined the proper name Dardanos, and invented a people of the Dardanians? Certainly not, because the Egyptian inscriptions in the time of Rameses II (*ca.* 1300 B. C.) do tell of such an Asia Minor people. Still the statements of Ktesias and Plato are highly interesting. As the commanders of the Dardanians appear Anchises and his son Aeneas. Anchises, however, was a son of Kapys, who had as father, Assarak. According to Conon (chap. 12) Assarak ruled in Dardania, while his brother Ilos ruled in Ilion. The historical tradition here becomes associated with Assyria, because Assarak is no other than Nisroch, the Assyrian eagle god of the Old Testament.

One sees that little of actual historical material has been preserved by the later Greeks; nevertheless the tradition indirectly testifies to the influences which Assyro-Babylonia exerted to some extent on the early Greeks. Nor was it alone the historical viewpoint of the Babylonians that was cultivated or at least retained to some extent; other cultural influences flowed steadily, sometimes slowly, sometimes rapidly, from Babylonia into Greece. While it would be difficult to show any traces of Oriental influences on Greek thought prior to the Persian period and subsequent to the Homeric period, contact with Persia undoubtedly brought the Greeks into direct touch with Babylonian thought. And in the time of Alexander there lived in Babylonia the greatest astronomer that antiquity has produced, namely, Kidinnu (Greek Kidenas), who directed the astronomer's school at Sippar *ca.* 314 B. C. Kidinnu, at that, wrote in Greek, and so did Sudines, one of his successors, who came *ca.* 200

B. C. to the court of the Attalides in Pergamon. Kidinnu's greatest discovery was the precession of the equinoxes, a discovery which is wrongly attributed to Hipparchos of Nikaia (*ca.* 146 B. C.). Such men, and especially Kidinnu, must have affected Greek astronomy much more than we have supposed. Also, Oriental, and especially Babylonian, thought began slowly to invade Greek literature as well; and we now unreservedly acknowledge that certain portions of the Babylonian astral religion entered into the arithmetic and geometric mysticism of the Pythagoreans. Plato himself was influenced by these astral ideas of the Babylonians much more than hitherto we could know, through his contact with Orphic mysticism and with the Pythagoreans. Eudoxos, the friend of Plato, also knew "the Chaldean art," and, while he rejected the horoscope and the fatalistic influence of the stars upon man, he nevertheless appears to have considered presaging from the heavens as truly scientific. Plato's pupil, Philip of Opus, as is to be seen from the *Epinomis*, is wholly captivated by Babylonian astrology. Especially strong were the Babylonian influences during the Hellenistic period. I need mention only two names: the Babylonian stoic, Diogenes of Seleukia on the Tigris (*ca.* 200 B. C.) and, in particular, the Syrian Poseidonios of Apameia (*ca.* 100 B. C.).

In the Hermetic and apocalyptic literature, especially in the apocalypses of Nechepso and Petosiris (the latter's book was called "the Bible of the Astrologer"), much Oriental and especially Babylonian knowledge of an astral nature was disseminated.

The influence of the Assyro-Babylonians in Greece reached even into the domain of plastic art. During the prime of the Hittites, the Phoenicians, and the Assyrians, there existed no plastic art in Greece which had any distinctness of style. Such a definite style appears for the first time in the draping of the Akropoliscores, and was developed in the second half of the sixth century. And it is exactly this purely stylistic stimulus which the Greeks at that time received from the Persians. For the scheme of draping is a

Persian contribution and was developed by them from indigenous beginnings. Style in hair treatment is Assyrian and came from Assyria to Persia and thence to Greece. In the Greek archaic plastic art practically every style of representation of hair and beard used by the Assyrians is present and it is the usual headdress of the Assyrians, not of the Greeks, that is the predominating form.

The Babylonian motive of two symmetrically arranged animals of the same type which are joined at the back is another instance of borrowing. It was taken over by the Greeks in the first millenium from Asia Minor. In Greece, besides the doubling of the same animal (see f. i., Brit. Mus. Cat. of Greek Bronzes no. 172), there appear variants of two different animals whose front parts are thus combined, as lion or horse, etc. (Furtwängler, *Die ant. Gemmen*, III, 105). It is, however, significant that only the "archaic-Greek" art knows this motive, and that it is unknown later on.

While I am of the opinion that prior to the Persian period extraneous influences were little felt in Greece, this fact gives no clue to what was going on in the pre-Homeric period. At that time Greece as a political power, such as the new material now reveals it to have been, had, *nolens volens*, to enter into the spirit of the Orient, and the Orient was dominated by Babylonian thought. This becomes clearer when we study the Odyssey and the Iliad in the new light which Oriental texts have thrown upon them. Here, however, I have to be very brief, but I hope without loss of clarity.

The Gilgamesh epic is one of the oldest literary works of the world. Its importance to the Babylonian is comparable only to the importance of the Pyramid texts to the early Egyptians. It deals with the heroic deeds and the painful tribulations of king Gilgamesh. Himself a demigod, he rebelled against the ancient gods and succeeded in the end in conquering them. He was the first human being to question an apotheosized man and a dead man regarding the secrets of the past, of death, of the future, and of paradise. He achieved all his will save in one thing only—

immortality on earth, though in striving for it he overcame immense difficulties and fearful dangers. But he remained subject to death, and was compelled to lead a shadow life in the world of the dead, though as a demigod, not like the other mortals; for he was a divine judge, a Babylonian Minos, Aeacus, or Rhadamanthys.

Thus the *Epos* was to the Babylonians not merely a heroic epic, but, dealing with a god who was still active and who was of importance to those still living, it was a gospel of a new solar divinity, the sacred book of the Babylonians.

We are now in a position to estimate the importance of that sacred book not only for the Babylonians, but also for other groups of people. This importance to others may now be further attested by the fact that the excavations in Boghazkoi in Asia Minor have brought forth fragments of the epic not only in the Assyro-Babylonian language, but also in translation into two non-Semitic languages. The mythology of the epic has spread far and wide and lives on in myths which have been developed from it, as in the case of the Syro-Arabic *Sul-Shumul* myth, and the Hindu *Sakti-deva* myth, and it forms the leading thread of the great Indic epics of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, etc.

Our special interest here is in the fact that the Gilgamesh saga has found its way into Greece, though rather indirectly via Syria or Palestine. It is well known that the Odyssey contains historical legends and myths woven with extraordinary artistic skill into a whole, which is generally taken as the chief argument in favor of a single authorship. This may or may not be true, for the cement which connects the various legends is taken from the Gilgamesh epic and might well have been the work of a single poet, or, equally well, the product of a school of poets. The action of the Odyssey occupies the last six weeks of the ten years of Odysseus' *Wanderjahre*. The number of weeks chosen is by no means accidental or irrevelant. Here already is an indication of Palestinian contacts. After the fall of Troy and the return of Odysseus, all went well at first until he touches Ismarus, a Thracian city, and then Malea, the extreme

southern point of Greece. But then appear the "ruinous winds" and we are at the beginning of the *Irrfahrten*, where at the same time we find ourselves face to face with old-Oriental mythological motives which go back to the Gilgamesh epic. Odysseus is carried with his ships to the land of the Lotus-Eaters, probably an epithet of the Egyptians. Continuing his journey he reached the country of the giant people called Cyclopes. The episode described corresponds to the adventure of Gilgamesh with the scorpion giants. Why the adventure with the Lotus-Eaters precedes the adventure with the Cyclopes offers some difficulty if compared directly with the Babylonian story, but this is cleared up when we remember that the myth had been transmitted to the Greeks via Judea. Here we have the analogous story of Moses, who had come from Egypt. When Moses sent his twelve spies into Palestine they found in that country, near Hebron, fearful giants. It will be recalled that Odysseus joins his twelve spies in entering the land of the Cyclopes. It had been observed that the giants of the Old Testament are called "men of names," that is "renowned men" (Gen. 6.4). This is interesting and it is therefore, to all appearances, not accidental that the name of the cannibal giant whose eye Odysseus destroyed, is called Polyphemus, son of Poseidon. Polyphemus, however, also means "highly renowned." Amycus, again, who, in the myth of the Argonauts, corresponds to Polyphemus in the Odyssey, has all the earmarks of an origin in the Babylonian word *emuqu*, **amuqu*, "strong." No discrepancy is to be found in the facts that the spies of Moses find delicious fruits, tremendously large grapes, pomegranates, and figs, in the country, which can be justified geographically, and that the Odyssey places this abundance of fruit in the country of the Cyclopes as well. *Odyssey* IX states: "And we came to the land of the Cyclopes, a froward and lawless people, who trusting to the deathless gods, plant nothing with their hands, neither do they plough: but, behold, all these things spring for them in plenty, unsown and untilled, wheat, and barley, and vines, which bear great clusters of the juice of the grape,

and the rain of Zeus gives them increase." From the country of the Cyclopes, Odysseus came to the isle of Aeolus, king of the winds. Aeolus is clearly an Utnapishtim figure. In the Moses story, where Aeolus corresponds to Balak, king of Moab, we learn why Odysseus returns a second time to Aeolus. Also, Moses was twice in Moab, first before he moved against the giant Og of Basan, and a second time after the journey of the twelve spies into Canaan. Then follows the adventure with the Laestrygonian giants, which seems to be a derivative of a Moses myth against the giant Og. After the giants of Laestrygonian Lamos had destroyed the fleet of Odysseus save one ship, he made his escape to the isle of Circe. Here we meet with pure Babylonian elements. Just as the goddess Ishtar had brought distress upon six of her lovers by changing them into various beasts, so the goddess Circe changed the companions of Odysseus into swine. And as Ishtar then asked for the love of Gilgamesh, so Circe entreated Odysseus to remain with her. The attitude of Odysseus toward Circe is the same as that of Gilgamesh toward the goddess Ishtar. On the way to the home of Circe in the woodland isle, Odysseus had met the divine messenger Hermes (Merkurius), who handed him the "herb of virtue" which he had plucked from the ground and the growth of which he had shown to Odysseus. This is exactly the episode in the Babylonian epic where Gilgamesh, having come to the divine forest and to the house of Ishtar-Siduri, met in the forest Amel-Ea, as he is in the act of plucking something. Having spent a year on the wooded island of Circe, the goddess commanded Odysseus to journey to Hades, in order to learn the way home from the ghost of the Theban prophet, Teiresias.

Odysseus' descent into Hades and his discourses with the ghosts of the departed heroes, especially with Teiresias, have long ago been brought into relation with the Babylonian epic, before it had even been closely studied from the standpoint of the mythologist. The corresponding details in both epics are as follows: Odysseus reaches the place where the rivers Pyriphlegethon and Cocytus, a branch of the water

of the Styx, flow into Acheron. Gilgamesh reaches the mouth of the streams in the uttermost west, across the *okeanos*, called in the epic the water of death. Odysseus meets the spirit of the Theban Teiresias, holding a golden scepter in the hand, indicative of kingship. Teiresias' wits "abode steadfast" and Persephone had given unto him judgment even in death that he alone should have understanding, while the other souls sweep, shadow-like, around. In agreement therewith, Gilgamesh meets the ancient king, Uthapishtim, who bears the epithet, *Atrachasis*, "the all-wise." While Teiresias tells Odysseus how he may reach home safely, and how he will die, Utnapishtim tells Gilgamesh that he will be compelled to die the death of all other mortals, while Utnapishtim's wife hands unto the hero a marvelous thing of the sea, as a talisman to carry him safely to his home.

The first soul which appeared to Odysseus was that of his companion, Elpenor, who had not yet been buried "for we left the corpse behind us in the hall of Circe, unwept and unburied, seeing that another task was instant upon us." Elpenor charged Odysseus: "Leave me not unwept and unburied as thou goest hence." Upon the request of Gilgamesh appeared the shadow of the quite recently deceased friend and companion Engidu, who also, at first, had been left unburied. Engidu informs his friend about the fate of the dead and especially of the wretched condition of those spirits whose bodies had remained unburied and uncared for.

Teiresias, however, who in the story of the Argonauts corresponds to Phineus, is not a pure Utnapishtim figure, but an old Utnapishtim and a dead Engidu. This fact again points, not in the direction of Babylonia, but to Palestine, as the country from which the motives were introduced into Greece. The composite figure is found in the Hebrew Gilgamesh myths and especially in the Moses myth in the person of Bileam, son of Beor, who announced his fate to Israel, after king Balak of Moab had called Bileam unto him.

The Odyssey is clothed not merely with motives of the Gilgamesh-Moses myth, but with motives from another cycle, in so far as the story of Telemachus is distinctly part of the Saul-Samuel-David myth. Just as Saul is sent out by his father with one companion to Samuel to question him regarding the whereabouts of the lost she-asses of his father, so Telemachus leaves his father's palace with Mentor, journeying to Nestor of Pylos, to inquire about his father's whereabouts. Saul as well as Telemachus meets old Samuel (old Nestor) while engaged in performing a sacrificial feast, and each guest receives the place of honor and partakes of the best morsels of meat. Both remain overnight and then depart, each with his companion. Telemachus came to Pherae to the house of Diocles, son of Orsilochus, and thence to Sparta, where Menelaus tells him what befell many of the Greeks on their return and that Odysseus was with Calypso in the isle of Ogygia, while Helen announced to the young man that Odysseus would soon again return home. Telemachus, leaving Lacedaemon with the presents given him by Menelaus, finally comes to the seer, Theoclymenus, who joins him on his way home. In the story of Telemachus we thus have three meetings, that is, the same number as in the story of Saul. Having left Samuel, Saul first meets two men who announced to him that the she-asses have been found, but that his father now worries over him. Next, Saul meets three men who hand him two loaves of bread, and finally some prophets, whom he joins on his way home. Having landed on the home shores, Telemachus goes to the hut of the swineherd, Eumaeus, and meets his father who reveals himself to him. In the Saul story Saul returns to the peasant home where he meets his uncle and where, in the meantime, the she-asses have been found.

In the Odyssey in place of the she-asses appears Odysseus the father, but the Saul-legend, which thus had to be modified to fit into the major theme, reappears with the animal motive in Book XXI in reference to the bow and arrows which Odysseus had received as gifts from Iphitus, son of Eurytus. Odysseus, as a boy, had gone to Messene, being

sent by his father to recover three hundred sheep which the men of Messene had taken, in benched ships, from Ithaca.

The Odysseus story, I hope I have made clear without entering into too much detail, is therefore a Gilgamesh-Moses legend, while the Telemachus story is connected with the Saul-Samuel-David legend.

The latter cycle of myths, however, also embodies at least the nucleus of the Iliad. Here Nestor corresponds to Samuel, Achilles to David, Agamemnon to Saul, and Patroclus to Jonathan.

Nestor had come to the fair-set halls of Peleus, the father of Achilles. There Peleus was burning the fat thighs of kine to Zeus, after which sacrifice the entertainment of strangers was set before the guest. In like fashion Samuel came to Isai, the father of David, and here also we have the sacrifice and the sacrificial meal. Peleus of Phthia sent his son to king Agamemnon, as David was brought from his home to king Saul. Achilles and David both play the lyre while Agamemnon and Saul are spear-throwers. Patroclus, who as a boy had been brought from Opus to the house of Peleus, had entered into friendship with Achilles, and is called Achilles' dearest comrade. So did David enter into close friendship with Jonathan though at the court of Saul. The premature death of Patroclus brought great sorrow to Achilles, as the premature death of Jonathan to David. Achilles is the leading hero under Agamemnon, David the leading hero under Saul. The relation between Agamemnon and Achilles at the siege of Troy was caused by the jealousies of Agamemnon, that is, the same motive which caused David to fall out with king Saul.

It cannot be my task within these limits to sketch the detailed correspondence of the Iliad with the Saul-Samuel-David myths—the few meager indications given must suffice for the present. A more intensive familiarity with the history and the culture of the Ancient Near Eastern peoples, and foremost among them the Babylonians, must do away with the still common, but entirely unfounded, prejudice that the Ancient Orient occupies but an inferior

position in comparison to the Classical world. It possessed its own *Weltanschauung* in a system which reaches back at least 2500 years before our era; and where it is found wanting in later developnent, it must be remembered that, as far as the development of European thought is concerned, besides the influences which its system exerted over the Far East, it created the necessary basis of European development, though, in the nature of things, it could not share in the accumulation of knowledge which later generations have enjoyed. Yet, though much had to be overcome (and was overcome as the silence of post-Homeric writers indicates), many elements of our Western civilization still preserve intact much which, directly or indirectly, has originated in the Near East, and especially in Babylonia.

Our modern calendar system rests on the Babylonian astro-mythological system, in which the seven planets play such an important rôle. Meton, in 432, introduced into Athens a calendar system which counted moon months of 29 and 30 days, and introduced the necessary intercalary month, thereby getting a cycle of 19 years=235 months= 6940 days, and in so doing, employed a system which was known in Babylonia as early as the beginning of the third millenium B. C. And Meton had by no means found this cycle—he simply introduced it as one of many possible ones. The sanctity of the number seven originated from the seven planetary divinities of the Babylonians. And the influence of the sacred numbers of the Ancient Near East has exerted itself also in regard to the number twelve. As the year has twelve months, so in antiquity the number twelve was also employed extensively in regard to the organization of states. The Hebrews counted twelve tribes, twelve the ancient Ionians in Asia, twelve *demoi* existed in Attica, twelve Etruscan cities formed an alliance, ancient Gaul was ruled by twelve princes who composed the highest nobility, twelve nobles ruled over the old Saxons in Germany. Similarly, the number thirty played an important rôle as the number of days in the month, not only in Babylonia and the Near East but also in Greece ($3 \times 30 = 90$ cities existed in Crete

according to the arrangement of Minos) and in the old Roman constitution. And Babylonian systems have deeply influenced the monetary, measure, and weight systems. While Herodotus, Plato, Pausanias, and Diodorus speak especially of Egyptian cultural influences on Greece, the influences which Babylonia directly or indirectly exerted on that country are not so apparent to the Greeks in the post-Homeric period, nor yet to us. But the more we are enabled to learn of the Babylonian culture and its radiation among other peoples, and the more we learn of the Homeric and pre-Homeric Greeks, the more we recognize the multitudinous threads that connect Greek thought with Babylonian thought and culture. And there is every possibility that new discoveries in the field of cuneiform literature will throw additional light on this interesting and important factor.